

MCSAC Task 17-02: Strategic Plan Development

Discussion Notes from June 12-13, 2017, MCSAC Meeting

Introduction

Task 17-02: The Agency requests that the Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee (MCSAC) review the Agency's categories and items included in the current strategic plan, identifying areas that need refinement, realignment, or refocus with current and future safety goals and objectives. Specifically, the Agency asks the MCSAC to identify which programs and safety initiatives should be the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA's) focus over the next 5 years.

I. Strategic Goal #1: Safety 1st Culture

- A. FMCSA stated the following outcomes it sees as being related to this goal and asked the Committee if these are the outcomes on which the Agency should focus:
 - 1. Prevent unsafe carriers from reincarnating to operate;
 - 2. Ensure only qualified drivers are behind the wheel of a commercial motor vehicle (CMV);
 - 3. Reduce the number of unsafe and high-risk behaviors;
 - 4. Address safety issues of a greater segment of the industry; and
 - 5. Improve enforcement effectiveness and efficiency.
- B. The MCSAC agreed that this strategic goal should focus on outcomes and goals with measurable results.
 - 1. FMCSA should improve data collection to enable measuring improvements via actionable data.
- C. This goal should focus on reducing crashes, injuries, and deaths.
- D. FMCSA should focus on initiatives that actually lower the number of crashes.
 - 1. The number of crashes has gone up over the last 5 years despite more enforcement and regulations. If it is not working, do something else.
 - 2. A member suggested that most crashes are caused by other vehicles, not the truck.
- E. A member suggested that FMCSA should improve the disconnection between what we know about interstate and intrastate carriers.
 - 1. There is a need to increase understanding and information to work with States to improve that area of operation.
 - 2. FMCSA is still accountable for the safety outcomes of intrastate commerce. The public does not know the difference between an intrastate and interstate vehicle.
- F. FMCSA should leverage State or regional strategies.
- G. Rethink approach to safety: what can FMCSA do beyond enforcement?
 - 1. Increase collaboration with others.
 - 2. Ensure that the traditional enforcement model is not the only tool.
- H. One member recommended that the Agency shift fundamentally how FMCSA addresses specific problems to accelerate the improvements (e.g., speeding), as was done for distracted driving.

- I. Another member suggested a focus on better entry-level driver training.
 - 1. Newer drivers are always less safe than experienced drivers.
 - 2. A member suggested implementation of a graduated commercial driver's license (CDL).
- J. A member suggested that FMCSA could use safe carriers as benchmarks against which to compare the safety metrics of other carriers.
- K. A member recommended a comprehensive speed limiter rule for all trucks, not just for new trucks.
 - 1. Ontario did this and fatalities involving trucks dropped 24 percent.
- L. FMCSA should prevent any spike in crashes that might result from an influx of new drivers that will replace the aging driver workforce.

II. Strategic Goal #2: Exponential Safety Power (ideas for programs, initiatives, or areas of focus to improve collaboration)

- A. FMCSA stated the following outcomes it sees as being related to this goal and asked the Committee if these are the outcomes on which the Agency should focus:
 - 1. Promote greater public involvement at all levels;
 - 2. Ensure high-risk populations receive education that positively impacts roadway safety and the industry; and
 - 3. Expand partnering efforts with new stakeholder groups to improve rulemakings and implementation of new initiatives.
- B. The Agency should establish goals that are more result-oriented, like FMCSA's original goal to reduce fatalities by 50 percent.
- C. Bring partners to the discussion that are not already involved:
 - 1. Shippers have an impact on hours of service (HOS) when they hold drivers;
 - 2. There is a need to improve CMV safety in work zones; and
 - 3. One member recommended a partnership for truck parking.
- D. Shipper and Supply Chain Engagement and Accountability
 - 1. Some members suggested that FMCSA needs to increase supply chain accountability.
 - 2. The Agency could incentivize efficiency without more drivers or trucks by collaborating with shippers and receivers to increase efficiency in their interactions with trucks and drivers.
 - 3. However, the Committee noted that FMCSA does not have authority to regulate shippers and receivers.
 - 4. Impact of detention of drivers: there is a need to address what to do when a driver is out of hours as a result of being detained for several hours but needs to leave the property.
 - 5. A member suggested increasing transparency for drivers on the weight of their vehicles after loading a shipment.
- E. Collaboration to Improve Data
 - 1. FMCSA should collaborate with States to improve interstate CMV data and results.
 - a. Regulation of over-the-road CMVs is not uniform across the country.

2. The Agency should collaborate with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) to improve the consistency of the reporting of violations.
- F. Collaboration to Understand What Leads to Crashes
1. FMCSA should collaborate with stakeholders to analyze specific causes of crashes, for example, the motivations for behavior that leads to crashes.
 2. The agency should involve industry stakeholders more in these discussions, including shippers and customers of buses.
 3. Determine what would motivate a driver to do something that that is illegal or drive faster than he or she should.
 - a. Causes of/motivations of speeding should specifically be explored.
 - i. FMCSA should foster a discussion around sound speed policy, which should include analysis of whether there is any relation between number of crashes and areas with different speed limits.
 - b. Compensation is usually a flat rate of money per mile driven but some drivers are finally starting to be paid by the hour for all hours worked.
 - c. The most common violation by drivers is falsified logbooks.
 - i. When mandatory electronic logging is implemented, those drivers will have an incentive to make up their mileage with speed.
 - d. FMCSA should make use of behavioral science to understand and change the behavior of both CMV and passenger car drivers.
 - i. Behavioral scientific models have been used in other areas of public health and could be applied to the commercial vehicle industry.
 4. Progress can be made with attitudinal change programs, e.g., health and wellness programs.
 - a. A goal should be to get people to do the right thing every time.
- G. Collaboration to Understand What Action Reduce Crash Risk
1. FMCSA should work with industry and research institutions to determine which technologies and behaviors are effective at reducing crashes.
 2. FMCSA should learn from others that have been successful at reducing crashes:
 - a. Europe has declining crashes.
 - i. FMCSA should review what other nations are doing with regard to CMV safety.
 - b. Look to carriers in the United States with excellent safety records:
 - i. What are they doing to have fewer crashes?
 3. Safety Culture
 - a. A strong safety culture at a carrier makes drivers safer.
 - i. One member suggested that safety culture produces better safety results than regulatory compliance.
 - b. How do you measure safety culture in a company or strategic plan?
 - c. Do carriers measure leading indicators that can indicate crash risk?

- d. Strong safety culture requires input from management team and employees.
4. To address fatigue specifically:
 - a. FMCSA should consider how carriers have implemented fatigue monitoring.
 - b. FMCSA should focus on how to prevent companies from sending drivers out to drive when they are fatigued.

H. Pilot Programs

1. FMCSA should encourage more participation in pilot programs across the industry by removing barriers to their implementation.
2. A member recommended that FMCSA should review pilot program regulations.
3. Another member suggested that there are opportunities for innovation if more carriers submit pilot programs.
4. What is the difference between obstacles in applying for pilot programs vs. applying for exemptions?

I. Drivers should be educated at a young age.

1. FMCSA could collaborate with school systems, driver's education classes, etc., and take a role in making education more uniform across the country.
2. FMCSA should begin or increase public service announcements on television or other media to educate passenger vehicle drivers on how to drive around CMVs because many drivers do not know how to drive around trucks.
3. A member stated that research has shown that driver training is not very effective for high schoolers but that it is for professional drivers.

J. Collaboration to Improve Passenger Vehicle Risks

1. FMCSA should build around existing collaborative efforts such as the Our Roads Our Safety campaign.¹
2. FMCSA needs to work with the rest of the Department of Transportation (DOT) to improve light-duty vehicle safety, as FMCSA does not have resources or authority to address crashes caused by non-CMVs.

K. FMCSA should gain support in the insurance industry for affecting better driver training.

L. One member suggested establishing an innovation council within FMCSA to look at new approaches.

III. Safety Goal #3: Comprehensive Data Utilization

A. FMCSA stated the following outcomes it sees as being related to this goal and asked the Committee if these are the outcomes on which the Agency should focus:

1. Improve access to high quality safety data collected;
2. Increase number of fleets that have incorporated a driver-focused safety culture centered around driver risk factors;
3. Increase market penetration of onboard safety systems; and
4. Increase deployment of electronic data exchange and smart roadside technologies.

¹ See <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads> (last accessed June 23, 2017).

- B. The focus should be on whether FMCSA has all the data it needs and whether it is analyzing it correctly.
- C. Standardize Crash Reports
 - 1. FMCSA should standardize crash reports across States for better and more consistent interpretation.
 - 2. A focus should be on consistency in data collection to enable direct comparisons.
 - 3. FMCSA and States need resources for updates to systems to increase the number of required fields and be able to collect more data.
 - 4. New and updated systems must be dynamic enough to input and review special data.
 - 5. A Committee member recommended that FMCSA create a partnership with States to gather all data.
 - 6. The MCSAC should review the recommendations of its sister advisory committee, the Post Accident Reporting Advisory Committee, which has analyzed data collection issues.
 - 7. A member suggested that crash data collected should enable an understanding of what the car does in a crash versus the truck.
 - 8. One member suggested that crash reports could include other digital data, such as videos or photos, so they can be analyzed from crash to crash.
- D. FMCSA should update its collection tools for the enforcement user.
 - 1. This would lead to better data about crashes.
- E. Onboard Safety Systems
 - 1. One member stated that speed limiters do not work to force a safe driving speed if the actual safe speed is below the speed limit due to road conditions.
 - 2. Another member suggested that fatigue monitoring technology can be a helpful way to give feedback to drivers.
- F. Other Suggestions Relating to Data
 - 1. FMCSA should analyze data that exists outside of the Agency (e.g., industry, insurance), as this merged data might be more robust than using just FMCSA's data.
 - 2. The Agency should merge data on drivers from States and from FMCSA to identify good and bad drivers.
 - 3. FMCSA should study and increase data on the determinants of high-risk behaviors such as distracted driving and drowsy driving.
 - 4. The Agency should identify differences between carriers that have a lot of crashes and those that do not.
- G. Within partnerships, FMCSA may need to collaborate with Congress on providing authority or removing limitations on authority to improve safety.